



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

plishment, and until they are accomplished, until in other words the social and economic conditions are quite different from what they are at present and bear a closer resemblance to the conditions of the West, it is useless to expect that a political organization based upon the conditions of the West can be advantageously adopted in China.

REMARKS ON PRESIDENT GOODNOW'S PAPER

SUDHINDRA BOSE

University of Iowa

I have listened with unusual interest to the learned paper on "Reform in China" just read by President Goodnow. It seems to me, however, that the Occidental people find no end of difficulty in understanding and interpreting our Oriental laws, customs, and institutions. We are told, for instance, that the Chinese like other Asians, who are mainly agricultural peoples, are unfit for representative government. I doubt if this statement can stand the test of adequate proof. Take, for example, the people of China, whose recorded history runs back to 2800 B. C. These Celestials, these agriculturalists, had from time immemorial enjoyed local self-government, had been accustomed to "take communal action:" they would close up their business and resist the imposition of an unjust tax. It is to be remembered that the powers of the mother of parliaments developed in this fashion. "The financial functions of parliamentary assemblies are always the centre of their action."

In India, another agricultural country, we had the village community which contained the true germs of representative government. These village communities have frequently been described by such authorities as Sir Charles Metcalf, Sir Henry Maine as "little republics."

Further, we are told by Western critics that the Chinese, along with the other people of the Orient, are slow to move, that they are static, preferring to submit to the iron rule of an autocratic king. On the other hand those who have even a slight acquaintance with Chinese history know that the Chinese

are a democratic people. Mencius, the great Chinese political philosopher, put the people first, the gods second, and the sovereign third in the Chinese scale of national importance. Mencius once said to a ruler: "If you can win the hill people—that is, the humblest of the common folk—then, indeed, will you become the Son of Heaven." Again, when Wu Wang killed the tyrant emperor Chow some time in the eleventh century before Christ, the Chinese historians wrote: "Wu Wang did not slay his ruler; he simply executed a tyrannical individual."

In India, too, we find that the ancient Hindu law-givers have laid down that the misgovernment of a tyrant king not only constitutes a default of the ruler's title, but even a forfeiture of his life. Indeed, Manu himself has said that a king who oppresses his subject should be deprived of his life together with his relatives.

In Asia as in Europe the divine right of kings, the belief that the rulers were appointed by heaven, has, of course, found credence. But when these Asiatic monarchs failed to promote the general happiness of the nation, failed to live up to the will of heaven, they were given short shrift. They were removed and replaced by another sent of heaven. Historians seem to admit that such revolutions have taken place at least twenty-one times in China, resulting in as many changes of dynasty. Besides, there have been various usurpations of power of a limited scope, and if all these partial revolutions are considered, China, the so-called conservative China, can boast of no less than thirty revolutions.

The old assertion that the Asian people are unfit for self-government does not bear examination. Look at Japan! When the Asiatic Japan promulgated its constitution of a parliamentary government in 1899, the astonished Europe laughed. Has not the marvellous success of Japan—Asiatic Oriental Japan—in establishing and maintaining a constitutional government proved beyond the shadow of a doubt what other Asian nations could also do if they were free?

In India, the land where I first saw the light of day—the land where mighty empires existed and flourished long before

the English had ceased to dwell in paleolithic caves—in India, I say, the people are told today, after a hundred and fifty years' of "enlightened cultured" rule, that the Indians are not and never will be fit for self-government. How in the name of common sense can a country be fit for self-government, or for that matter for anything, unless it has a chance to try it out? Is it not almost a political truism that self-government alone fits a nation for self-government?

To be sure, some of the Oriental nations have shown incompetency: they have been found guilty of graft and corruption. We are sincerely sorry for them. But I have been informed on good authority that there are also many countries in the West which are not above the charges of graft and corruption. Are we to believe now that the Western nations have proved their inability for representative governments? For one, I have little faith in the judgment of patronizing Europeans, who on their annual summer tours in the United States brazenly ask: "How long can this republic endure?"

To conclude, I challenge the assumption that representative forms of government are the monopoly of the West. I resent the implication that the Orientals are in any essential manner different from the Occidentals. We of the East ask only one thing of the West. It is this—that you of the West stay away from us and our problems: leave us to solve our own problems, to work out our own destinies, while you spend your time looking after yours. The greatest good you can do us, the lasting benefit you can confer on us, is to let us alone.